

What I Learned From My Slip

1. When a slip happens, do not panic. Make the decision to quit again right away, and throw away all your cigarettes.
2. Dwelling on feelings of guilt or shame will only prevent you from reaching your real goal - quitting smoking for good!
3. The sooner you quit again, the easier it will be.
4. Think about what you can learn from the slip. For instance, try to figure out what caused you to slip and what you should do next time you are tempted to smoke.
5. Getting support is important as you learn how to get past a slip.
6. Most importantly, even if you slip once, twice, or even multiple times, you can still quit for good. Do not give up!



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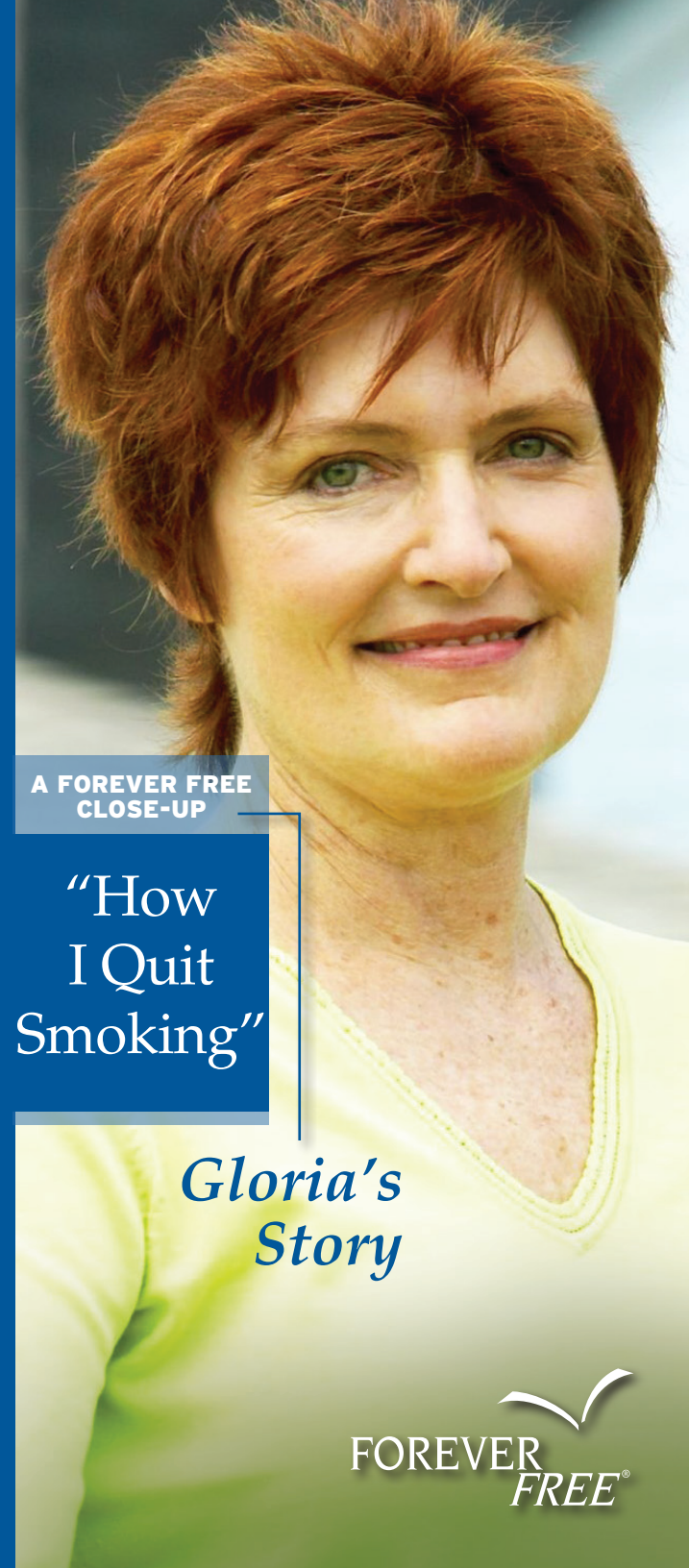
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The people depicted in this series were inspired by real individuals,
but the particulars were changed to protect their privacy.



**A FOREVER FREE
CLOSE-UP**

**“How
I Quit
Smoking”**

***Gloria's
Story***



Managing a Slip

Hi, my name is Gloria. I am a 60-year-old grandmother with a full-time career in Human Resources. For more than half my life I smoked about a pack a day. I even smoked throughout my pregnancy and my son's childhood. Although I had made a few attempts to quit, I cannot say I ever tried whole-heartedly.

I finally began to change my smoking habits when my son told me that he did not want me around my grandchildren if I was still smoking. One weekend I was babysitting the kids and we were outside playing in the yard when my cravings to smoke became all I could think about. So I snuck to the side of the house and smoked. I quickly ran back to the kids and almost instantly started having trouble breathing. I couldn't seem to catch my breath. As I struggled for air, my grandchildren watched in fear. It was in that moment that I knew I had to quit for them. I wanted to be there to see them grow up. After that day, I went to see my doctor who gave me a prescription for CHANTIX™. As I started using the medication, I no longer wanted to smoke. For the first time in over 35 years, I had finally quit smoking.



The Slip

I was smoke-free for almost five weeks when my job became very stressful. My workload had more than doubled and was very overwhelming. I needed a break. I noticed a few of my co-workers were taking a smoke break every few hours. Just like that, I went back to my old way of thinking. "Maybe I will just have one cigarette". It would be nice to get away from work even if only for a few minutes. Before I knew it, I was taking smoke breaks every day.

One week later, my husband found the pack of cigarettes I bought that day. When he asked me why I started smoking again, I instantly felt guilty and ashamed. I thought about my grandchildren and the reasons I had quit in the first place. My breathing finally started to improve, and I certainly did not want all of my progress to go to waste. My husband and I talked about why I started smoking again and the stress I was having at work. He also reminded me of all of the reasons I quit smoking and how far I had come before my slip. I made a promise to myself that I was not going to give up my goal to be smoke-free just because I slipped. I threw away the rest of the pack and made the decision to quit again that day!



Starting Over: Renewed Commitment

I am glad that I did not wait too long before quitting again. I knew it would only get harder the longer I waited. I also knew that I needed to work on preventing another slip in the future. First, I had to learn what triggers caused my cravings. Being aware of them allowed me to plan and find strategies to get past the cravings. I also had to develop new positive habits to handle stress instead of using cigarettes. For example, when I feel stressed at work, I do deep breathing exercises at my desk. This calms me down and gives me a small break from my daily tasks. I also keep a list of my reasons to stay smoke-free next to my desk. The top two reasons are my grandchildren and my health. Finally, I have to remind myself that just because I slipped, it does not

mean that I have to give up on my goal to be smoke-free.

I am happy to report that I have been completely smoke-free for two years now. It wasn't easy, and I certainly had some bumps in the road, but it was worth it.

I spend a lot more time with my grandkids these days. I can even keep up with them without losing my breath!

